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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/966,611	09/27/2001	Eduardo Chi Sing	034298-121	7377

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EXAMINER

BAXTER, JESSICA R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3731

DATE MAILED: 05/07/2003

13

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/966,611

Applicant(s)

SING ET AL. *Ch*

Examiner

Jessica R Baxter

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11 and 14-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11 and 14-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

1. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 7-11 and 14-27 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-30 of U.S. Patent No. 6,183,497. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims of the patent are essentially the same as those in the present application.

3. It is noted that in the response (dated February 26, 2003), a terminal disclaimer was intended to be filed along with the response (pg 2-3). The terminal disclaimer is not in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by "Sheath Needle for Liver Biopsy in High-Risk Patients" to Chuang et al.

Chuang discloses a method comprising the steps of removing tissue from a vascular site, positioning a pledget of absorbable sponge material adjacent the vascular tissue site wherein the absorbable sponge material includes a contrasting agent.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 8-11, 14, 15 and 22-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chuang et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,708,718 to Daniels.

Chuang et al. discloses the claimed invention except for the specific contrasting agent used in the sponge. Daniels teaches that water insoluble or water-soluble contrast agents may be used in an implanted device so that the sponge may be visualized under X-ray (Column 5 lines 48-64). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use a water-soluble or water insoluble contrasting agent in the method of Chuang et al. in order to observe the sponge using X-rays.

8. Claims 16, 17, 18 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chuang et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,098,728 to Rosenblatt.

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Chuang discloses the claimed invention except for the contrasting agent being preloaded prior to delivery. Rosenblatt teaches that the entire sponge is radiopaque in order to facilitate the determination of the location of the entire sponge (Column 3 lines 10-17). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the radiopaque material into the sponge of Chuang in order to allow the whole sponge to be observed.

9. Claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chuang et al. in view of Rosenblatt '728 as applied to claims 16, 17, 18 and 21 above, and further in view of Daniels '718.

Chuang et al., as modified, discloses the claimed invention except for the specific contrasting agent used in the sponge. Daniels teaches that water insoluble or water-soluble contrast agents may be used interchangeably so that a sponge may be observed under X-ray (Column 5 lines 48-64). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide either water-soluble or water insoluble contrast agents to the sponge of Chuang since either one can be used to produce the same effect.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments filed February 26, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

11. Regarding claim 7, In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., that the contrasting agent is not incorporated into the sponge) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from

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the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

12. Regarding claim 22, In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., that the contrasting agent is not incorporated into the sponge prior to hydration) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Conclusion

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jessica R Baxter whose telephone number is 703-305-4069. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30AM - 5:00PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Milano can be reached on 703-308-2496. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3590 for regular communications and 703-305-3590 for After Final communications.


Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.

Jessica R Baxter
Examiner
Art Unit 3731



jrb

April 29, 2003



MICHAEL J. MILANO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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